

CAPPARIS BREVIS SPRENGEL IS A GLYPHAEA

Joseph V. Monachino

I have examined an apparently authentic flowering specimen of Capparis brevis Sprengel, deposited in the De Candolle Herbarium at Geneva. The plant is identical with the widely distributed tropical African tiliaceous species excellently illustrated and described as Glyphaea grewioides Hook. f. (Ic. Pl. t. 760. 1848).

The Geneva specimen was annotated in 1852 by A. De Candolle who noted that it seemed to be a Clematis, but that, in any event, it was not a member of the Capparidaceae. In 1853 Benthham identified it as "Carpotroche?" Sprengel himself in Lim. Syst. Veg. 2: 576 (1825) refers C. brevis to Capparis eustachiana Jacq., but his original description in 1807, which agrees very closely with the Geneva specimen, obviously precludes any such disposition. C. eustachiana has entire, not trinerved, leaves, and is glabrous, while C. brevis has subserrate trinerved leaves, pubescent petioles, and scabridulous stellate-pubescent branchlets.

On the Geneva sheet De Candolle suggested that the specimen probably was sent to Sprengel from the Antilles, a notion in harmony with the belief that C. brevis is referable to the West Indian C. eustachiana. The type, however, was obtained from the Razoumoffsky garden, and Sprengel's species is listed in F. E. L. von Fischer's Catalogue du Jardin des Plantes à Gorenki (ed. 2, p. 52. 1812; ed. 1, p. 85. 1808, fide A. DC. Prodr. 1: 253). C. brevis is placed in the synonymy of C. eustachiana by the Index Kewensis; otherwise it has been given little attention.

Hooker in his Flora Nigritiana (p. 238. 1849) cited the prior Grewia lateriflora Don as a synonym of Glyphaea grewioides. This synonymy is accepted by Oliver (Fl. Trop. Afr. 1: 267. 1868), who treats likewise Glyphaea Monteiroi Hook. f. The latter species was noted to be only doubtfully distinct by J. D. Hooker in the original publication. With my discovery of the identity of Capparis brevis and Glyphaea grewioides, and accepting the findings of previous workers, the complete synonymy of the species is as follows:

GLYPHAEA BREVIS (Sprengel) Monachino, comb. nov.

Capparis brevis Spreng., Fl. Hal. Mant. Prima 43. 1807.

Grewia lateriflora G. Don, Gen. Syst. 1: 549. 1831.

Glyphaea grewioides Hook. f., Ic. Pl. t. 760. 1848.

G. Monteiroi Hook. f. in Curtis, Bot. Mag. t. 5610. 1866.

G. lateriflora Hutch. & J. M. Dalz., Fl. West Trop. Afr. 1: 239. 1927.

Only one other species of Glyphaea is known, G. tomentosa Mast. ex Oliver. G. Boivini Baill. and G. chalybaea Baill., attributed to the genus Glyphaea in the Index Kewensis, were actually published in Grewia by Baillon (Bull. Soc. Linn. Paris 1: 550. 1886).